IGUANA GIRL

THE IGUANA PRINCESS ASKED THE SORCERESS:

"OLD SORCERESS, I HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A HUMAN PRINCE. PLEASE. MAKE ME A HUMAN GIRL."

"SO BE IT," SAID THE SORCERESS. "I SHALL MAKE YOU A HUMAN GIRL. BUT IN RETURN..."

CONGRATULATIONS, MRS. AOSHIMA. IT'S A FINE, HEALTHY GIRL.
B2

GYAA
GYAA
GYAA
PHEW

LOOK! HERE'S YOUR MOMMY!

KYAH-H-H-H

GYAA
GYAA
GYAA
CALM DOWN MRS. AOSHIMA. ALL NEWBORNS LOOK LIKE MONKEYS.
NO! IT CAN'T BE! IT'S SO...SO...
YOU'LL THINK SHE'S CUTE ENOUGH AFTER YOU'VE NURSED HER A BIT.
AHH! IT HAS FANGS!
IT IS UNUSUAL FOR A BABY TO BE BORN WITH HER TWO FRONT TEETH LIKE THIS.
IT'S A LIZARD!
MRS. AOSHIMA, I'M TELLING YOU, ALL BABIES LOOK LIKE THIS AT FIRST.

...

HEY, I SEE OUR LITTLE PRINCESS IS HAPPY!
RIKA! PAPA'S HOME!

OH, YES! LOOK AT THOSE CUTE LITTLE FINGERNAILS!
TWITCH
"CUTE"?

D--DOES SHE REALLY LOOK LIKE A HUMAN BABY TO YOU?
TO ME... TO ME...
...

WAHHH
...SHE LOOKS LIKE A LIZARD!!
Y-- YURIKO!
WAHHH
IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY EYES?
ARE THESE THE MATERNITY BLUES?
I CAN'T LIVE WITH THIS THING!
THOSE TEETH!
IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BITE ME!
GODS, PLEASE! THIS ISN'T WHAT I WANT!
PLEASE GIVE ME A NORMAL LITTLE GIRL!!
LOOK, RIKA! IT'S YOUR LITTLE SISTER!
HER NAME'S MAMI!
I'M SO HAPPY.

MA-A-
MI-I-I

MY DARLING MAMI.
YES, THIS IS WHAT I ALWAYS DREAMED OF.
SO CUTE IN HER PINK SLEEPER AND BOOTIES.

MAA-
MAA

DON'T TOUCH MAMI WITH THOSE DROOL-COVERED HANDS.

GO AWAY!
STOP PESTERING ME!

WAHHHH
NOW YOUR CRYING HAS STARTED MAMI CRYING!
WAHHH

THERE, THERE. SUCH A BAD BIG SISTER YOU HAVE.
HIC
HIC

RIKA!
THIS IS FOR YOU.
HE'S THE KING!
NOBORU.
WOW!
PAK
IT'S SO BIG!
SPROING
OPEN UP!
MAMA! MAMA! LOOK!
RIKA!
?
WAPP
KYAH-H-H-H

LA LA LA!

THE KITTY GOES "MEOW".
THE PUPPY GOES "RUFF"

YOU LEARNED THAT IN KINDER-GARTEN? THAT'S GREAT!
MAMI HAS SUCH A CUTE VOICE.

WHAT ABOUT ME?
YOU'RE GREAT TOO, RIKA.

RIKA'S VOICE IS SO HOARSE FOR A CHILD.
IT SOUNDS LIKE A BROKEN LIZARD'S VOICE.

RIKA'S A LIZARD.

BONK

RIKA!

LOOK. THEY'RE BOTH SO CUTE IN THIS PICTURE WE TOOK AT THE SHRINE.
DON'T COMPARE RIKA TO MAMI AND CRITICIZE HER LIKE THAT.
IN PHOTOS, SHE LOOKS LIKE A HUMAN BEING.
IT'S SO STRANGE.
BUT...

YOU JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND!
THIS IS WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE TO HIM AND EVERYONE ELSE.
AM I SEEING HER FOR WHAT SHE REALLY IS...?

WAHHHH
...
Y-YURIKO
YURIKO
SHE'S LIKE A GALA-PAGOS IGUANA!!

THAT BIG MOUTH AND THOSE EYES AND THOSE BOW LEGS...
YURIKO! WHAT A THING TO SAY!

RIKA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

KOFF

STARE

MAMA, AM I UGLY BECAUSE I'M AN IGUANA?

PUTTING MAKEUP ON THAT UGLY FACE!

I WAS THINKING LEMON YELLOW FOR RIKA.
AND SOUR PINK FOR MAMI.
I ALREADY HAVE SO MUCH PINK. I WANT THE YELLOW ONE.
WELL, THEY'RE THE SAME SIZE. DO YOU WANT TO TRADE, RIKA?
GRANDMA, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.
THEY WERE ON SALE.
WOW! I'VE NEVER WORN PINK BEFORE.
OH, MY.
MAMI LOOKS NICE IN YELLOW, BUT RIKA...
YES, YURIKO HAS A DARK COMPLEXION, SO PINK DOESN'T SUIT HER.
SHE'S NO FUN TO DRESS UP.
HEE HEE
THAT'S BECAUSE RIKA'S UGLY.
OW!
RIKA!

I'M READY!
WHERE'S RIKA?
RIKA!
WAH!
C--
COMING!
RIKA!
GRAB GRAB
CLATTER
WHY DIDN'T YOU DO THAT LAST NIGHT!?
STUPID GIRL!
IF I'M LATE, IT'S RIKA'S FAULT!

T-T-TMP

RIKA! THROW ME THE BALL!
NOBORU.

WHOA!

VMMM

HUH...?
THAT'S SOME ARM, RIKA!
YOU SHOULD JOIN THE TEAM!

MAMA, I FINISHED DECORATING THEM.
OH, THAT'S SO CUTE. YOU HAVE SUCH GOOD TASTE.

BAKING COOKIES WITH MY DAUGHTER.
I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF THIS.

I...
I'M HOME.

RIKA, ON THE OTHER HAND...
RIKA! WIPE THAT FLOOR!
RIKA'S SO DIRTY.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN BORN A GIRL!
YOU'RE BIG AND YOU'RE STRONG.
RIKA'S REALLY A BOY! RIGHT, NOBORU?

RIKA CAN'T BE A BOY! IF SHE WAS A BOY... WELL...

OOOO, SOMETHING'S GOING ON WITH NOBORU AND RIKA!
SOME-THING'S GOING ON!

HIT IT OUT OF THE PARK, RIKA!
BEAT THOSE SIXTH GRADERS!
TURN THIS GAME AROUND!
RIKA!
KRACK
IT'S A GROUND BALL!
IT'S A HIT!
RUN! RUN!
ZOOSH!
MAMI! LOOK OUT!
DON'T TOUCH IT!

THWAPP
WAHHHH
TMP
OW!!
MAMI!
OUT!
RIKA! COME BACK!
RIKA!
HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN!?
SNIFF SNIFF
YOU MEAN MAMI'S FRONT TOOTH? THAT WAS JUST A BABY TOOTH, AND IT WAS ALREADY LOOSE, WASN'T IT?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO QUIT JUST BECAUSE WE LOST THE GAME.
BUT MOM SAYS IT'S DANGEROUS.
LET ME TALK TO YOUR MOM.
NOBORU ...
ABC

WELL, BUT YOU'RE A BOY, NOBORU. RIKA'S A GIRL. SHE SHOULDN'T BE PLAYING BASEBALL.
SORRY, NOBORU.
WELL, WE TRIED.
HMPH. LITTLE GRADE-SCHOOLER TALKING LIKE A GROWN-UP!
RIKA THINKS SHE'S A GROWN-UP.
NOBORU...
YOU PICKED A HOT DAY TO COME VISIT.
JUST MAKING THE ROUNDS OF MY PUPILS' HOMES.
RIKA MUST CAUSE YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE.
SHE'S ALWAYS BREAKING DISHES OR BUYING THE WRONG THING WHEN I SEND HER ON AN ERRAND.
SHE'S SUCH A SLOW, STUPID GIRL.
WELL, SHE HAS A HIGH I.Q.

HUH?
SHE GOT THE HIGHEST SCORE IN THE SCHOOL ON THE I.Q. TEST.
IF SHE CONCENTRATES ON HER STUDIES, HER GRADES SHOULD IMPROVE.
WHA --!
RIKA IS... SMART!? THAT UGLY IGUANA?
SMARTER THAN MAMI...?
B--BUT SHE'S AN IGUANA...
WHY...
OF ALL THE NERVE!!
MAMA
TODAY'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, ISN'T IT?
THIS IS A PRESENT FROM ME.
OH! WHAT IS IT?
IT'S BEAU-TIFUL.
MAMI, YOU'RE SO KIND.

OH. RIKA. WHAT IS IT?

UM...

I GOT MY TESTS BACK TODAY.
TWITCH

98
100
93

WHAT IS THIS!? WHY AREN'T THEY ALL 100!?

BUT... MAMI GOT A 75 THE OTHER DAY...
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT MAMI!

YOU THINK JUST BECAUSE YOU DID WELL ON THE I.Q. TEST THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO STUDY!
THIS ISN'T SOMETHING I WANTED TO SEE ON MY BIRTHDAY.
I'M REALLY DISAPPOINTED WITH YOU!
HEE HEE
I.Q. ...? HUH?

CAN YOU PUT A RIBBON ON IT? IT'S A PRESENT.

IT'S A DAY LATE, BUT HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MAMA.
HOW MUCH DID THIS COST?
UM... 1500 YEN.

...

1500 YEN!? WHAT A WASTE OF MONEY!

YOU TAKE THIS BACK RIGHT NOW!

U...

YOU --!!

WAHHH

YOU'RE ALWAYS SO NICE TO MAMI, BUT YOU'RE ALWAYS YELLING AT ME!

WH-- WHAT!

STOP THAT CRYING! YOU'RE BEING RIDICULOUS!

DON'T YOU EVER LET ME HEAR YOU SAY IGUANA AGAIN!!

I BET THAT ON THE DAY I WAS BORN...
YOU MUST HAVE MADE SOME KIND OF MISTAKE.
GOD
SPLASH
... A HUMAN BABY WAS BORN IN AN IGUANA NEST.
YOU MUST HAVE GOTTEN THE SOUL AND THE BODY MIXED UP.
WHY WAS I BORN AN IGUANA?
SHE MUST HAVE DIED RIGHT AWAY. IGUANAS DON'T HAVE BREASTS, SO THEY COULDN'T HAVE FED HER.
RIGHT. WHEN I GROW UP...
...I'M GOING TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS...
...TO LOOK FOR MY REAL MOTHER AND FATHER.

立高等学校

HIGH SCHOOL

UM. YOUR NAME'S RIKA AOSHIMA, RIGHT?

(WHAT HE SEES)

HERE.

HUH?

YOUR BLACK HAIR AND RED LIPS KNOCK ME OUT.

MUST BE A PRACTICAL JOKE.

AOSHIMA, WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A BOYFRIEND?

I'M TOO UGLY.

UGLY!? WHAT DOES THAT MAKE US!?

BOOKWORM!

?

NOD
OH.

YOUR SISTER?
YEAH. SHE GOES TO H— UNIVERSITY.

WOW! BEAUTY **AND** BRAINS, HUH?

YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?

MAMI AOSHIMA... YOUR FIRST CHOICE IS H— UNIVERSITY?
YEAH. MY SISTER GOES THERE, SO I THOUGHT...

THAT'S A HARD SCHOOL TO GET INTO.
HUH? BUT MY SISTER GOT IN.

THAT WAS YOUR SISTER. WITH YOUR GRADES, YOU'LL HAVE TO LOWER YOUR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT TWO RANKS.

SHOCK
...

RIKA...
RIKA

RIKA

SURE. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT MOM WAS ALWAYS SAYING.
BUT YOU DID USED TO HIT ME A LOT.
I'M SO MEAN.
...CALLING YOU STUPID AND UGLY...

YOU REALLY ARE SMART, AREN'T YOU?
AND I WAS ALWAYS MOCKING YOU...

IT'S ALL RIGHT.
RIKA...

MAYBE YOU CAN'T SEE IT, BUT LIKE MOM SAYS, I'M AN IGUANA.
BUT RIKA...

WELL IT'S PARTLY YOUR OWN FAULT, BEATING YOURSELF UP LIKE THAT.
WHAT MAMI SEES
I'M NOT BEATING MYSELF UP.
IT'S THE TRUTH.

RIKA.
I USED TO WISH I HAD BEEN BORN A HUMAN BEING.

BUT NOW I DON'T MIND.
IT'S NOT BAD LIVING AN IGUANA'S LIFE AMONG HUMANS.
BESIDES ...
...WHEN YOU SEE THROUGH AN IGUANA'S EYES, A LOT OF PEOPLE LOOK LIKE ANIMALS.

COLLEGE IS JUST FULL OF ALL DIFFERENT KINDS OF ANIMALS.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT IT THAT WAY...

...BEING AN IGUANA IS NO BIG DEAL.

LOOKS LIKE AESOP'S FABLES

AOSHIMA!

HOW ABOUT CATCHING A MOVIE THIS SUNDAY?

I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU OUT FOR A WHILE.

A SHEEP ...?

NO, IT'S SHIZUO YASUDA. HE'S IN THE SAME SEMINAR AS ME.

HE'S THOUGHTFUL AND FUN TO TALK TO...

SHIZUO...

ZZZZ

GWAH

CHOMP

OH NO!

I'M GOING TO EAT SHIZUO UP!

AND I THOUGHT I WAS A HERBIVORE...

I FORGOT THAT I'M AN IGUANA!

AND HE'S ALREADY GOT A NEW GIRL.
IT WAS GOING SO WELL... BUT I LEFT HIM.
I'LL NEVER KNOW REAL LOVE...
IT'S USELESS.
DSH
DSH
...

FUMP
ROLL
ROLL
WHUMP

AH! I'M SORRY!!

FAPP

ARE YOU HURT?
WHAT'S THIS GIANT BULL!?

YAWN YAWN
YAWN
YAWN

IT TOOK HIM THREE YEARS TO PASS THE ENTRANCE EXAMS.
WHAT'S WITH THAT BACKPACK?
LAST YEAR I JOURNEYED THE SILK ROAD. ALONE.

ZZZZ
SHOW ME YOUR NOTES LATER.

NO. DON'T FALL FOR HIM.
YOU'LL JUST EAT HIM UP.

HM?
CHOMP
HM!
SHAKE
FAPP
ARE YOU HURT?
I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THIS BULL!!

I DON'T TRUST A BOY WHO TOOK THREE YEARS TO GET INTO COLLEGE.
I WOULD NEVER LET MAMI MARRY SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
RIKA, DON'T GO TO SAPPORO! IT'S SO COLD UP THERE!
MARRIED STRAIGHT OUT OF COLLEGE!!
MAMI! YOU'RE SO... REBELLIOUS THESE DAYS!
I'LL MARRY WHOEVER I WANT, MOM, WHETHER YOU LIKE HIM OR NOT.
HIS PARENTS LIVE A STONE'S THROW AWAY. THEY'RE JUST LIKE HIM.
SO WE STARTED OUR MARRIED LIFE UP NORTH, IN AN APARTMENT IN SAPPORO.
I'M SO HAPPY.
HAPPINESS ...

I FEEL SO FULFILLED, I'M ALMOST FRIGHTENED.
HAPPINESS IS BEING WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE.

YOU'RE NOT GOING HOME FOR NEW YEAR'S? YOU DIDN'T GO HOME IN THE SUMMER, EITHER.
THAT'S BECAUSE I HATE BEING AWAY FROM YOU, KAZUHIKO.

IF I WASN'T SO BUSY WITH WORK, WE COULD GO TOGETHER. I'M SORRY, RIKA.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT. I SENT MY PARENTS SOME HOKKAIDO BUTTER.

BESIDES, I DON'T WANT TO HEAR MOTHER BADMOUTHING KAZUHIKO.
YOU'RE A FOOL TO TRUST HIM!
THREE YEARS! JUST TO GET INTO COLLEGE!

OH, I AM SO HAPPY.
WE'RE TOGETHER FOREVER.
WE HAVE OUR LITTLE FIGHTS. THEN WE MAKE UP.

H--HOW CAN THIS BE?
OH, SHE'S A BEAUTY. JUST LIKE HER MOMMY!
SMILE FOR THE CAMERA!

札幌第一病院
(FIRST SAPPORO HOSPITAL)
GYAA GYAA GYAA GYAA GYAA

BUT SHE'S JUST LIKE... A HUMAN BEING.
SHE'S SO CUTE!
PHEW
I THOUGHT THE BABY WOULD BE AN IGUANA... OR A BULL, LIKE MY HUSBAND.

...

GURGLE GURGLE

GULP

SHE LOOKS A BIT LIKE MOTHER...

I...I'M AFRAID OF MYSELF.
I DON'T FEEL ANY LOVE FOR HER AT ALL.
IT'S LIKE SHE'S SOMEONE ELSE'S BABY.
WELL, SHE STILL LOOKS LIKE A MONKEY.

WHAT IS IT? MATERNITY BLUES?

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
HIC HIC
NOT AT ALL.

IT HASN'T SUNK IN FOR ME YET, EITHER.
JUST WAIT TILL SHE STARTS CRAWLING AND LAUGHING. THEN YOU'LL THINK SHE'S CUTE.
DO YOU THINK SO?

IT'S ONE THING TO NOT THINK SHE'S CUTE...
...BUT WHAT IF I START TO HATE HER?
RESENT HER?
RRRING

RRRING
WAH!

WHAT THE... IT'S FOUR A.M.!
KLAK

HELLO? HELLO?
RIKA!!

WH-- MAMI?
WHAT'S WRONG!?

I...I'M AT THE HOSPITAL...
IT'S MOTHER. SHE'S...SHE'S...

MOTHER?

MY MOTHER DIED OF A SUDDEN HEART ATTACK. SHE WAS FIFTY-TWO.
SHE WAS FINE TILL LAST NIGHT.
MOTHER...
THEN SHE COLLAPSED, AND WE CALLED AN AMBULANCE. SHE SEEMED FINE WHEN WE GOT TO THE HOSPITAL, BUT...
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BABY.
THANKS, MOM.
I'LL JOIN YOU TONIGHT, RIKA.
MOTHER...
...IS DEAD.
千歳空港
ターミナル
I FEEL RELIEVED.
I DON'T FEEL THE LEAST BIT SAD.

HOW CAN I NOT FEEL SUCH ORDINARY GRIEF?

I'M A COLD-BLOODED IGUANA!!

SHE'S IN HERE.
TMP

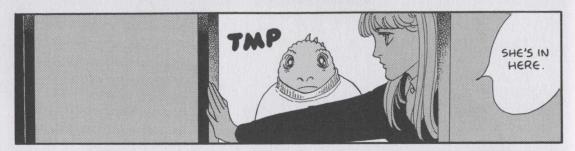
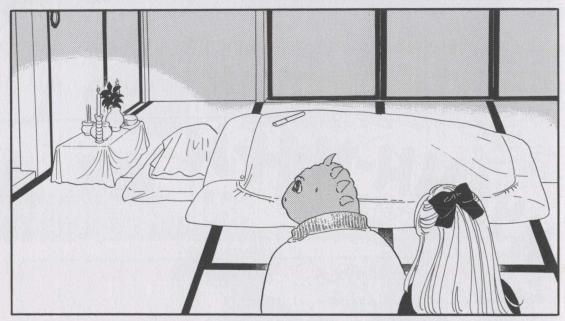
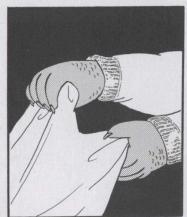
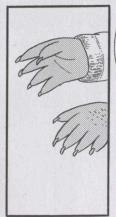
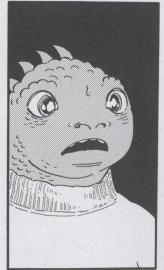
SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S SLEEPING. THEY SAY SHE DIDN'T SUFFER.
LOOK AT HER FACE, RIKA.

MAYBE WHEN I SEE HER FACE...
...I'LL FEEL SOME KIND OF SORROW.
...

KYAHH-H-H-H
RIKA!
KYAHH
KYAHH

AH!
AH!
RIKA! RIKA! CALM DOWN, DEAR!
AH!
AH!
AH!
CALM DOWN, DEAR. SEE? SHE LOOKS SO PEACEFUL, DOESN'T SHE? AS IF SHE'S ALIVE.

SH--SHE LOOKS J-J-JUST LIKE ME!
OF COURSE.

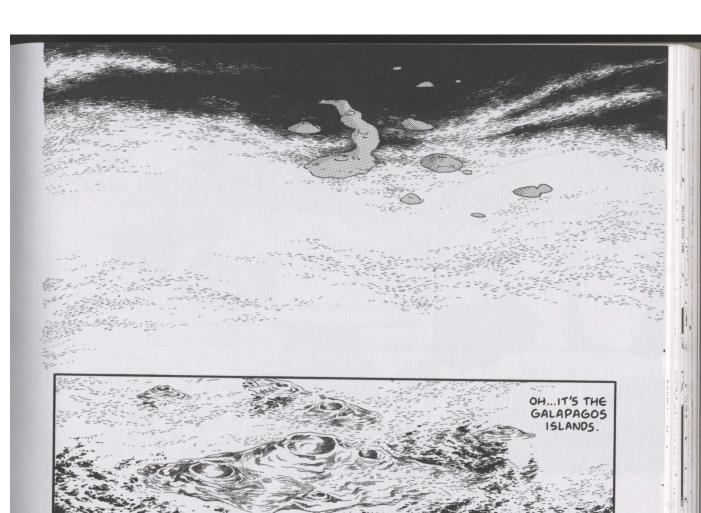
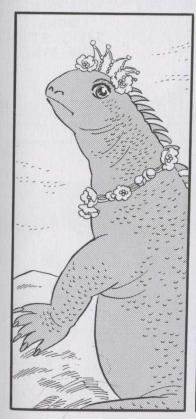
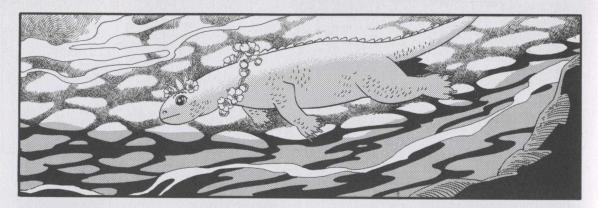
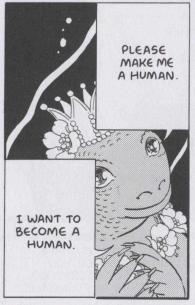
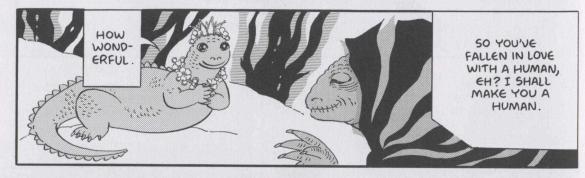
RIKA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'VE ALWAYS SAID YOU LOOK LIKE YURIKO, BUT SHE USED TO GET SO ANGRY WHEN I SAID THAT.
YOU REALLY DO LOOK ALIKE.

OH...IT'S THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS.

PLEASE MAKE ME A HUMAN.
I WANT TO BECOME A HUMAN.

WHAT IS IT, IGUANA PRINCESS?

OLD SORCERESS.

SO YOU'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A HUMAN, EH? I SHALL MAKE YOU A HUMAN.
HOW WONDERFUL.

BUT IN RETURN, YOU MUST BE ON YOUR GUARD. IF YOUR PRINCE LEARNS THAT YOU ARE AN IGUANA, HE SHALL LEAVE YOU.

I'll make sure he never learns.
I'll forget I was ever an iguana...
...and live my life as a human.
Mother
Mother
And what did you think when I was born?
You had been so happy. It must have been a shock. You were so determined to never be found out.
You must have suffered so.
It must have been hard for you.
You gave birth to me, but couldn't love me.
It must have pained you to not be able to love me.
MOTHER!

RIKA.
AH!

...

I... I MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING.
...

AHH...
AHH...

AHH...

WATCH YOUR STEP, FATHER.
IT'S SO SUNNY, YOU'D NEVER KNOW WE HAD A SNOW STORM LAST NIGHT.
LOOK HOW SMALL SHE'S BECOME.
...

HA HA

LOOK, YUU! A BUTTERFLY!

HAH!

I SEEM TO REMEMBER YOU CRYING BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T THINK SHE WAS CUTE.

HA HA

I SUFFERED TOO. I WANTED MOTHER TO LOVE ME, BUT SHE HATED ME.

I WANTED TO LOVE HER...BUT I COULDN'T.

I WENT TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS IN MY DREAM, AND SAW MY MOTHER.
BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.

MY SUFFERING WAS WASHED AWAY...
...ALONG WITH MY TEARS.

BUT SOME-WHERE...

...MOTHER'S TEARS REMAIN IN STASIS, JELLED.

END